acceptability in the market. BALCO has successfully developed five bar chequered plate and rolled products for space applications through in house research.

PARTICIPATION OF FOREIGN COMPANIES IN MINING INDUSTRY

3424. SHRI SURESH PACHORI : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decides to allow equity participation of foreign companies exceeding 50 per cent non-captive mines so as to attract big multinationals in the country's mining industry;

(b) if so, how many foreign countries have welcomed this measure;

(c) The member of foreign companies have offered to partic pate; and

(d) What are the total foreign companies whose cases were cleared ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) to (d) The National Mineral Policy placed before this House on 5-3-1993 liberalising further the conditions pertaining to foreign investment in the mining sector has generated interest amongst foreign mining companies. Under the Policy, equity participation over 50 per cent by foreign parties in non-captive mines can be considered on a case to rase basis. Effect of these will show after consequential amendments to the Mines & Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, have been made.

MINING OF VALUABLE MINERAL IN CHHOTA NAGPUR KODRAMA AREAS IN BIHAR

3425. SHRI BRAHMADEO ANAND PASWAN : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for which Government do not initiate exploration/mining of those mineral Chhota Nagpur Kodrama area in Bihar already identified for illegal village mining activities with a view to exploring the natural wealth of the country;

(b) The reasons for which the Ministry has not established any rapport with the Ministry of Environment and Forests for finding out ways and means whereby exploration/mining work could be undertaken in these areas; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to ensure that the natural wealth in the area is explored unearthed for economic prosperity of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected from the Government of Bihar and will be laid on the Table of the House.

जस्ता संयंत्र को आयातित कोयले की आपूर्ति

3426. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव :** क्या खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि कोयले का आयात कर उसकी जस्ता संयंत्र को आपूर्ति की गयी जबकि देश में कोयले का प्रचुर भंडार उपलब्ध है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो सरकार ने संबंधित अधिकारियों की जवाबदेही निश्चित करने तथा उनके विरुद्ध कार्यवाही करने की दशा में क्या प्रयास किए हैं ?

खान मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री बलराम सिंह यादव) : (क) और (ख) सरकार ने हिन्दुस्तान जिंक लि. द्वारा मैटालरजीकल कोक के आयात मामले की जांच करने के लिए एक जांच समिति बनाई है । समिति की रिपोर्ट की प्रतीक्षा है ।

PROCUREMENT OF SPARES AND TOOLS BY M.E.C.L.

3427. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. had

placed an order for procurement of various drills, spares and tools worth lakhs of rupees which were not required by the company; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) The Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) placed orders for purchase of 29 drill machines and certain tools and accessories amounting to Rs. 3.36 crores during January-February, 1990. The allegation that orders were placed for drills, spares and tools not required by MECL has been referred to CBI for enquiry. The CBI on the basis of preliminary enquiry have filed an FIR against seven officials of MECL.

BAUXITE SUPPLY IN THE COUNTRY

3428. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bauxite supply position has become critical due to depletion of the bauxite reserves in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial steps Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

CONVERSION OF HCL DUES INTO EQUITY

3429. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) has proposed its total loan plus interest outstanding to the Government be converted into equity; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and Government's decision thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) Hindustan Copper Limited has proposed for conversion of its outstanding loan and interest thereon of Rs. 166.56 crores and Rs. 83 crores respectively as on 31-3-93 into equity. It has been decided to keep the proposal of the Company in abeyance.

AVAILABILITY OF GOLD IN BIHAR

3430. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA : SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR BIRLA :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Bihar has sent a preliminary report to the Ministry of Mines on the availability of gold in Bihar areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the States have also sent reports with regard to availability of gold in their States; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard and steps taken by Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir. The detailed report on the investigations for gold in Sono Block, Karmatia area, Jamui District, Bihar has been sent by Bihar Government.

(b) The report submitted by Directorate of Geology and Mining (DGM), Bihar has indicated a total resource of 223 million tonnes of gold ore with an average gold as say of 0.17 g/t which is very low. As such, the Karmatia prospect does not appear to be of economic significance.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.